

MONSON W. BLISS.

MAY 26, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. BOTKIN, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 5920.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5920) granting an increase of pension to Monson W. Bliss, have examined the same and all the evidence and respectfully report:

This bill as amended proposes to increase the pension of Monson W. Bliss, of Kansas City, Mo., from \$12 to \$24 per month. He served from August 14, 1862, to August 17, 1865, in Company D, Twentieth Michigan Volunteer Infantry, and was honorably discharged; and also in Second Battalion Veteran Reserve Corps.

The records show that he was treated while in service for catarrh and was transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps on account of feebleness of constitution. He has never filed a claim for pension under the general law. He filed and established a claim under the act of June 27, 1890, for double inguinal hernia, and was pensioned therefor at \$10 from date of filing to December 4, 1891, and \$12 thereafter. His hernia did not originate until 1880, and he has no disability which is alleged or shown to be due to service.

He is shown by evidence filed with this committee to have locomotor ataxia and to be totally disabled for manual labor thereby, and that such condition is not due to soldier's own vicious habits. He is in a very bad condition, but he is not shown to be so disabled as to require regular and constant or even frequent and periodical aid and attendance of another person.

He is about 55 years of age and lives at Kansas City, Mo., and is poor; has a wife and child to support.

An increase of pension to \$24 is warranted, on the ground of his present condition. It is not due to his service, and therefore the above increase is all that can be justified.

The bill is reported back with the recommendation that it pass when amended as follows:

Line 4, after the word "Bliss," insert the word "late."

Line 6 strike out the word "invalid."

Same line strike out the words "of the United States" and insert in lieu thereof the words "and pay him a pension."

Same line strike out the word "thirty" and insert the word "twenty-four" in lieu thereof.

Strike out all after the word "month," in line 7, and insert in lieu thereof the following: "in lieu of the pension he is now receiving."

Amend the title so as to read: "A bill granting an increase of pension to Monson W. Bliss."

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., May 18, 1898.

GENTLEMEN: In regard to the bill pending before you for the relief of Monson W. Bliss, I desire to state that while I have but slight personal acquaintance with Mr. Bliss, he has twice called at my office in regard to this matter, and I have seen him once upon the street. I know from personal observation that he is totally disabled from performing any physical labor. He walks with a cane and sometimes with a crutch, only with great difficulty; one foot he drags all the time he is walking, and appears to me like a man suffering with partial paralysis or locomotor ataxia. He was personally recommended to me as a worthy man, and one who was in need, by Capt. Stuart Carkener, a lawyer of excellent standing in Kansas City, and himself an old soldier.

I herewith inclose a letter from him in regard to this matter.

Yours, respectfully,

W. S. COWHERD.

The COMMITTEE ON INVALID PENSIONS,
House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson:*

On this 6th day of December, A. D. 1897, personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county duly authorized to administer oaths, Monson W. Bliss, aged 55 years, a resident of Kansas City, in the county of Jackson and State of Missouri, who, being duly sworn, declared as follows: I was enlisted in Ann Arbor, Mich., in Company D, Twentieth Michigan Infantry, on August 15, 1862; went into camp at Jackson, Mich., immediately. About September 2, 1862, we were ordered to Washington City, D. C., and then went to Fort Lyon, Va., remaining only a few days, when we were ordered to join the Ninth Corps, which we did at Pleasant Valley, Md., on or about October 1, 1862. October 14, 1862, our regiment marched to Noland's Ford, Maryland, to intercept Stuart's cavalry, leaving me with others who were unable to march at Pleasant Valley. On October 28, 1862, I with others able to march started to join our regiment at Noland's Ford, and on our way we camped at Berlin, Md., but without tents or other protection from the weather. It rained on us all night, and the next day I was unable to walk, and a part of the time I crawled on my hands and knees. I knew I was in the enemy's country and used every effort to join my regiment, which I did after dark on the evening of October 29, 1862. At this time I was so disabled from stiffness with rheumatism that I was totally unable to perform any duty, and I was sent to convalescent camp at Alexandria, Va., but I continued to get worse and was sent to the Fairfax Seminary Hospital, where I remained until muster out. I did clerical work in the hospital.

MONSON W. BLISS.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 6th day of December, 1897.

[SEAL.]

JESSIE ROGERS, *Notary Public.*

(My commission expires January 21, 1901.)

KANSAS CITY, MO., *December 8, 1897.*

I have made a careful examination of Monson W. Bliss and find him suffering with locomotor ataxia to such an extent as to entirely disable him from earning a livelihood. He walks with great difficulty; the coordination of the arms is somewhat affected, and in his speech he is unable to pronounce his words clear and distinctly.

I find an entire absence of syphilitic history, marks, or symptoms, and believe that his trouble is the gradually developed effect of exposure to cold and rain during the night of October 28, 1862, and the succeeding day.

L. G. TAYLOR, M. D.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 8th day of December, 1897.

[SEAL.]

JESSIE ROGERS, *Notary Public.*

My commission expires January 21, 1901.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

In the matter of pension claim of Monson W. Bliss, Company D, Twentieth Michigan Volunteer Infantry.

On this 8th day of December, A. D. 1897, personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county, duly authorized to administer oaths, E. F. Rogers, aged 67 years, a resident of Kansas City, in the county of Jackson and State of Missouri, who, being duly sworn, declared in relation to aforesaid case, as follows:

I have known this applicant for some ten or twelve years. He has always shown signs of rheumatism or trouble in his limbs, but is much worse now than when I first knew him. He can now scarcely walk, and his speech and movements are greatly impaired. I collected a claim for pension for him under the law of June 27, 1890, because I found it would be next to an impossibility to get the positive proof of origin of disease, while I have not had any doubt as to his condition being the result of exposure received while in the Army.

He has been wholly unfit for the performance of manual labor for several years. He is a gentleman of high standing and good habits.

My post-office address is 27 Beal's Building, Kansas City, Mo.

I further declare that I have no interest in said case, and am not concerned in its prosecution.

E. F. ROGERS.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this day by the above-named affiant, and I certify that I read said affidavit to said affiant, and acquainted him with its contents before he executed the same. I further certify that I am in no wise interested in said case.

[SEAL.]

JESSIE ROGERS, *Notary Public.*

(My commission expires January 21, 1901.)

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

In the matter of pension claim of Monson W. Bliss, Company D, Twentieth Michigan Infantry.

On this 8th day of December, A. D. 1897, personally appeared before me, a notary public in and for said county, duly authorized to administer oaths, A. A. Francis, aged 41 years, a resident of Kansas City, in the county of Jackson and State of Missouri, who, being duly sworn, declared in relation to aforesaid case as follows:

I have known above-named applicant since about 1881. I know he is a man of good habits. For the past ten years I know he has been greatly afflicted with his locomotion, and it is with difficulty he gets around. He is entirely unable to perform manual labor, and has been for several years.

My post-office address is 917 Main street, Kansas City, Mo.

I further declare that I have no interest in said case and am not concerned in its prosecution.

A. A. FRANCIS.

STATE OF MISSOURI, *County of Jackson, ss:*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this day by the above-named affiant; and I certify that I read said affidavit to said affiant and acquainted him with its contents before he executed the same. I further certify that I am in no wise interested in said case.

[SEAL.]

JESSIE ROGERS, *Notary Public.*

(My commission expires January 21, 1901.)

KANSAS CITY, MO., *January 19, 1898.*

MY DEAR SIR: My old friend, M. W. Bliss, informs me that you have very kindly introduced a bill into Congress providing for a pension for him, and requests me to write to you concerning the same.

I have known Mr. Bliss for a long time, and I know that he is in every way a most deserving man—sober, industrious, and upright—and that he makes every possible effort that he can to make a living for his wife and children. As I suppose you know, he is partially paralyzed, so that he can only stagger around with the aid of a cane, and his speech is very materially affected by his disease. In consequence, although a competent business man, he finds it impossible to get any employment. I have myself made numerous efforts to get him employment, but his physical condition is such that I have been unable to do so.

That he has been reduced to great straits I personally know, inasmuch as I have repeatedly loaned him small sums to meet the absolute necessities of life, and have always found him thoroughly honorable, returning such loans to me the minute he could get hold of the money.

I know nothing personally about his services in the Army, but have been informed that he was a faithful soldier, which, from my knowledge of his character at this time, I am quite ready to believe. Whatever may be the merit of other applicants, I have no possible question but that Mr. Bliss is deserving of the pension contemplated in the bill you have introduced, and I most sincerely hope that you will be able to pass the bill in the House, as I am assured of assistance, from one who knows Mr. Bliss's condition, to get it through the Senate.

Very truly yours,

S. CARKENER.

Hon. W. S. COWHERD,
Washington, D. C.

No man in Kansas City stands higher than the writer of the above letter.

